

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 /056 W

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R 150435Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6030

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SUVA 0494

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FJ

SUBJECT: ELECTION AFTERMATH -- ALLIANCE MAY FACE FIRST TEST

REF: A. SUVA 0470

B. SUVA 0453

1. MINORITY ALLIANCE GOVT. HAS ASKSD GOV GEN TO CONVENE FIRST POST-ELECTION PARLIAMENT APRIL 28, OPENING WAY FOR OPPOSITION TO MOVE VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE AND TOPPLE GOVT., IF IT SO DESIRES. SINCE ALLIANCE MAY BE FORCED SUPPLY NON3;958,G HOUSE SPEAKER FROM OWN REDUCED RANKS, IT COULD FACE A MOTION WITH ONLY 23 VOTES VERSUS 26 FOR OPPOSITION NATIONAL FEDERATION PARTY (NFP). SOLE FIJIAN NATIONALIST PARTY (FNP) MEMBER, SAKIASI BUTADROKA, HAS DECLARED HE WOULD VOTE WITH OPPOSITION ON A CONFIDENCE MEASURE, WHILE SINGLE INDEPENDENT IN 52-MEMBER HOUSE, RATU OSEA GAVIDI, REMAINS UNDECIDED.

2. BUTADROKA HOWEVER, WILL LOSE HIS SEAT IF HE IS SENTENCED TO MORE  
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THAN 12 MONTHS IMPROSIONMENT ON RECENT CHARGES OF UTTERING STATEMENTS PREJUDICIAL TO PUBLIC PEACE AND UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY. GOF HAS MOVED QUICKLY TO CLIP WINGS OF RABBLE-ROUSER AND TWO OTHER SENIOR FNP LEADERS WHO HAVE BEEN ENDEAVORING MAINTAIN EXTREMIST MOMENTUM IN PUBLIC MEETINGS.

3. ALTHOUGH NFP LEADERSHIP PROFESSES BITTERNESS AT GOV GEN'S

DECISION REAPPOINT RATU MARA AS PRIME MIN. PARTY IS CHARACTERISTICALLY DIVIDED ON QUESTION OF VOTING OUT ALLIANCE IN HOUSE, FORCING EARLY ELECTIONS AND PROBABLY PRECIPITATING ANOTHER CRISIS. OPPOSITION LEADER SIDDIQ KOYA, WHO GOV GEN PASSED OVER FOR MARA, HAS ASSERTED NFP READINESS CONFRONT ALLIANCE IMMEDIATELY WHILE NFP SEC GEN HAS TOLD ME PARTY WILL PERMIT ALLIANCE TO GOVERN INDEFINITELY RATHER THAN REPEAT RECENT TRAUMA.

4. ALLIANCE LEADERS WITH WHOM I HAVE TALKED ARE UNITED IN JUDGING THAT NFP WILL MOVEK VOTE CONFIDENCE AT FIRST SITTING NEW PARLIAMENT, AND, GIVEN OPPOSITION'S DIVISIONS, MIGHT NOT CARRY THEMOTION IF MOVED. GOVT. LEADERS ALSO CONVINCED THAT WIDESPREAD CHAGRIN OVER DEFEAT OF RATU MARA EXISTS AMONG FIJIANS WHO VOTED FOR RACIST FNP OR REFRAINED FROM VOTING, HEAVILY CONTRIBUTING TO LALLIANCE DEBACLE. ALLIANCE STRATEGY IS TO REFRAIN FROM INTRODUCTION BILLS IN PARLIAMENT WHICH MIGHT PROVOKE NO CONFIDENCE MOTION, CARRY OUT INTENSIVE FENCE MENDING, AND HOLD NEW ELECTIONS IN PERHAPS 6 - 12 MONTHS.

5. COMMENT: ON BALANCE, MINORITY GOVT. SEEMS TO HAVE GOOD CHANGE OF SURVIVING FIRST SESSION OF NEW PARLIAMENT. CURRENT ABSENCE OF CONSENSUS ON POLITICAL POSTURE WITHIN NFP, WHICH NOW CONSULTING CONSITUENTS ON FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION, SUGGESTS THAT ALLIANCE WILL BE PERMITTED ABIDE THROUGH NEXT SITTING OF HOUSE, ON OPPOSITON SUFFERENCE.

6. A CONTINUATION OF FAMILIAR ALLIANCE GOVT. WOULD SEEM BEST FOR REDUCTION BOTH INTRA COMMUNAL TENSIONS, EXACERBATED AMONG FIJIANS BY FNP, AND AMONG INDIANS BY GOV GEN IN TURNING DOWN KOYA AS CONFIDENTIAL

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PRIMEMIN. INDIANS PERHAPS TRUST RATU MARA MORE THAN ANY OTHER ETHNIC FIJIAN PUBLIC FIGURE TO GOVERN MULTI-RACIAL COMMUNITY WITH EVEN HAND. KOYA, HOWEVER, WAS CLOSE TO TRUTH IN CHARGING HE WAS REFUSED PRIME MIN APPOINTMENT ON RACIAL GROUNDS.

7. FIJI IS PROBABLY NOT READY FOR INDIAN LEADERSHIP, AND CERTAINLY THE GOV GEN AND FIJI'S PARAMOUNT CHIEFS RATU SIR GEORGE CAKOBAU, IS NOT. WHILE DISCUSSING RECENT EVENTS, GOV GEN SAID IN AN ASIDE TO ME, "CAN YOU IMAGINE AN INDIAN AS PRIME MINISTER? I CANNOT." ALTHOUGH GOV GEN COULD PLAUSIBLY STATE IN VIEW VICTORS' DISARRAY HE REAPPOINTING RATU MARA AS PERSON BEST ABLE COMMAND SUPPORT OF PARLIAMENT, A CONSTITUTIONALLY IMPECCABLE POSITION, HIS DILEMNA WAS LARGELY RESOLVED BY THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND THE POLICE COMMISSIONER. THE LATTER SUPPLIED HARD EVIDENCE OF A SERIOUS SECURITY PROBLEM BREWING, BASED ON RISING RACIAL TENSIONS, AND THE FORMER COUNSELED THE GOV GEN, ON THE CONSITUTIONAL MEANS OF ARRIVING AT SOLUTION THE GOV GEN, AND PROBABLY RATU MARA, SOUGHT. (IN FACT, THE CHIEF JUSTICE WROTE RATU GEORGE'S ANNOUNCEMENT.)

8. REPEATING THIS SOLUTION, WHICH MAY NOT STAND THE TEST OF TIME, WILL BE DIFFICULT, YET THE SAME SITUATION COULD AGAIN ARISE IF NTT CLEAR MANDATE WERE RETURNED BY ELECTORATE IN NEW ELECTIONS, A PROSPECO WHICH BOLSTERS NFP MODERATES' ARGUEMENTS FOR PERMITTING ALLIANCE TO CONTINUE GOVERNING. THE WRONG APPROACH THEN COULD PRODUCE THE FIRST STREET VIOLENCE SINCE 1959, WITH ABOVE-SURFACE POLARIZATIONS THAT HAVE SO FAR BEEN AVOIDED.  
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## Message Attributes

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